

REMARKS

Claims 1-12, 21-23, 25, and 26 are pending in this application.

Applicants propose to amend claims 1, 7, and 21. The proposed changes do not introduce any new matter and, as explained below, are believed to place the application in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request entry of this proposed amendment.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the courtesy of the telephonic interview conducted on July 10, 2003. As discussed during this interview, Applicants are submitting proposed amendments to the claims that are believed to place the application in condition for allowance.

Applicants propose to amend independent claims 1 and 7 to specify that the drain holes are substantially V-shaped or substantially U-shaped. Neither the Sichmann et al. reference nor the Tung et al. reference discloses or suggests a spin bowl having drain holes that are either substantially V-shaped or U-shaped. Accordingly, independent claims 1 and 7 are patentable over the prior art of record.

Applicants propose to amend independent claim 21 to specify that the drain holes and the inner surface of the lower portion of the sidewall are oriented so as to define a substantially V-shape such that the excess fluid retained in the external fluid catch area while the spin bowl is spinning forms a fluid seal that prevents air from flowing through the drain holes. Applicants note that claim 21 defines a spin bowl that corresponds to the embodiment shown in Figures 5A and 5B of the subject application. In this embodiment, the fluid seal is obtained using straight drain holes that intersect with a suitably configured channel. As shown in Figures 5A and 5B, the drain holes (106') and the inner surface of the lower portion of the sidewall (102b'') are oriented so as to define a substantially V-shape, and this

configuration results in the formation of a fluid seal as shown in Figure 5B. The spin bowl shown in the Sichmann et al. reference includes an external fluid catch area (see, e.g., reference numeral 20 in Figure 2); however, the openings between bars 56 and the external fluid catch area are not configured to trap fluid such that a fluid seal prevents air from flowing through the openings. Furthermore, the openings between bars 56 are not oriented at a specific angle as specified in claim 21. Accordingly, for at least these reasons, claim 21 is patentable over the prior art of record.

Regarding independent claim 26, Applicants note that this claim specifies that the spin bowl includes substantially V-shaped drain holes. As discussed above, neither the Sichmann et al. reference nor the Tung et al. reference discloses or suggests a spin bowl having drain holes that are substantially V-shaped. Accordingly, claim 26 is patentable over the prior art of record.

For the reasons set forth above, as well as the reasons set forth in the Amendment filed on November 20, 2002, independent claims 1, 7, 21, and 26 are patentable over the prior art of record. Claims 2-6, each of which ultimately depends from claim 1, claims 8-12, each of which ultimately depends from claim 7, and claims 22, 23, and 25, each of which depends from claim 21, are likewise patentable over the prior art of record for at least the same reasons set forth regarding the applicable independent claim.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and reexamination of claims 1-12, 21-23, 25, and 26, as proposed herein, and submit that these claims are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, a notice of allowance is respectfully requested. In the event a telephone conversation would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner may reach the undersigned at (408) 749-6902. If any additional

Application No. 09/713,846
Proposed Amendment dated July 14, 2003
Response to Office Action mailed February 12, 2003

fees are due in connection with the filing of this paper, then the Commissioner is authorized to charge such fees to Deposit Account No. 50-0805 (Order No. NOVEP005).

Respectfully submitted,
MARTINE & PENILLA, L.L.P.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. B. Martine', with a stylized flourish at the end.

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